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Faculty of Music

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Scholarship Series

JOHN HAWKINS, *pianist*
assisted by Faculty Artists

Student Ensembles prepared by Victor Feldbrill

Concert Hall, Edward Johnson Building

SUNDAY, MARCH 14th, 1971 at 8:30 p.m.

(2)

PROGRAM 1ST TAPE

Quartet Op 22 for Clarinet, Tenor Saxophone, Violin and Piano *Webern*

Sehr Mässig

Sehr Schwungvoll

ANNE RAPSON, violin
JOHN RAPSON, clarinet
LAWRENCE SEREDA, tenor saxophone
CAROLYN GADIEL, piano
HARVEY SACHS, conductor

The work is dedicated to Webern's friend and champion, the architect Adolf Loos, for his sixtieth birthday. As with the Opus 20 trio and Opus 21 symphony, Webern hesitated between a two or three movement piece. After two months work on a third movement, he decided to abandon it. The unusual instrumentation was also the result of much thought. Some sketches show a horn part rather than a saxophone part.

The first movement is in sonata form. A five-bar introduction leads to the exposition which is ten bars long and is repeated. The second section, twenty-two bars, is also repeated and leads to a four-bar coda. Webern makes much use of canon and inversion in this movement: the piano usually plays inverted canon between right and left hands while the other instruments are paired off in various combinations. Instrumental timbres serve to clarify such complex formal procedures as take place, and in both movements the violin is treated as a plucked or a bowed instrument in turn.

The second movement, one of Webern's longest, is a set of variations, each marked by rhythmic and intervallic differences as well as by a dynamic that remains more or less consistent within a variation. For the ear the structure of the movement is hard to grasp but the various dynamic levels give some clue. As in the first movement, Webern has given precise articulation and dynamic indications in almost every bar which leave almost nothing to chance, and instrumental timbre seems to be more important than idiomatic instrumental writing. (M.E.)

Octet for Woodwinds and Strings (1904-1949) Nikos *Skalkottas*

Allegro moderato

Andante cantabile

Presto

ELIZABETH McBURNEY, flute
PETER SMITH, oboe
JOHN RAPSON, clarinet
FRANK MARCUS, bassoon
FUJIKO IMAJISHI, violin
EDWARD LECOUFFE, violin
MARGOT BURTON, viola
JOSE SHAPERO, cello
HARVEY SACHS, conductor

Skalkottas was a pupil of Philipp Jarnach and Kurt Weill in Berlin in the 20's. From 1927 to 1931 he was a member of Schoenberg's master-class at the Berlin Academy of Arts. A brilliant violinist, as well as a composer, his total

output numbers some 150 works, among them concertos for piano, violin and cello as well as chamber music. He adopted Schoenberg's twelve-note method and this, together with elements of Greek folk music, forms the basis of his style.

The Octet was composed in 1931, a year which also saw the appearance of two string quartets and the first piano concerto. The manuscript was lost for many years, having been left behind in Berlin when Skalkottas returned to his native Greece in 1933. The pianist George Hadjinikos discovered it quite by chance in a music dealer's in 1955. He prepared a miniature score which was published in 1967.

In mood, the outer movements have many moments of ebullient gaiety, the style is pointillistic and there is much rapid exchange of motives between winds and strings. Towards the end of the first movement the prevailing high spirits are checked as though in preparation for the slow movement. This *Andante cantabile* develops a tone row made up of two transpositions and an inversion of the motif a, d flat, c. After a serenely lyrical opening in which flute, viola, cello and bassoon in turn present permutations of the basic motif, an insistent repeated note figure in the strings breaks in. Later in the movement this process is repeated but with instrumental roles reversed. The *Presto* finale ends the work with a brilliant flurry of contrasted material and is, like the slow movement, tripartate in form. (M.E.)

—intermission—

2ND TAPE

Piano Piece (1968) *Hugh Hartwell*

JOHN HAWKINS, piano

Hugh Hartwell was born in Hamilton in 1945 and is currently completing graduate work at the University of Pennsylvania. His Piano Piece was finished during the Winter of 1968. Throughout the piece there are abrupt juxtapositions of lyrical and more percussive material, and passages recalling early Schoenberg and Berg appear side by side with configurations or gestures which suggest more recent music, (early Boulez, for example). Pitch and rhythmic organization are relatively free, but some kind of overall unity is achieved by the use of recurring motives as well as some contrapuntal techniques such as retrogradation. The overall effect could be termed a 'rhapsody' or 'fantasy' in which the idea of 'free association' plays an important part. (J.H.)

Estampes *Claude Debussy*

i Pagodes

ii Soirée dans Grenade

iii Jardins sous la Pluie

JOHN HAWKINS, piano

Estampes ('prints' or 'engravings') were completed in 1903 and may be considered Debussy's first major essay for piano. A different national atmosphere is suggested by each of the three pieces. (The 'Images' for orchestra which were to follow in 1912 also take the form of three 'national portraits'.)

The opening piece 'Pagodes' is a delicate and sensitive evocation of the Far East (South-East Asia before . . .) built largely on pentatonic scales. The beginning is marked 'delicately and almost without nuances'. Missing, of course, are the exaggerated 'emotional climaxes' of post-Wagnerian symphonic music. We are in quite a different world — an almost child-like dream-world.

In 'Soirée dans Grenade', the second piece, the Spanish flavour is produced by Debussy's use, in a kind of ostinato fashion, of a Habanera rhythm. Although the Habanera was a dance of Cuban origin, it was extremely popular in Spain at the turn of the century. At times the piano writing ingeniously imitates the sound of a strummed guitar. An atmosphere of mystery and perfumed nostalgia.

The final number of the set is 'Jardins sous la Pluie', an 'impression' (horrible word to Debussy!) of rain-drenched gardens. Debussy builds the piece largely on two French folk-tunes — 'Nous n'irons plus au bois' and 'Do, do, l'enfant do' — working them into rapid pianistic figurations which suggest the rain. In a letter to a friend Debussy writes: 'When one cannot afford to travel, one must make voyages in one's imagination. (J.H.)

Eleven Echoes of Autumn (1965) *George Crumb*

ROBERT AITKEN, alto flute
JAMES CAMPBELL, clarinet
VICTOR MARTIN, violin
JOHN HAWKINS, piano

". . . . y los arcos rotos donde sufre el tiempo." (Federico Garcia Lorca)
(". . . and the broken arches where time suffers.")

This work was written in 1965 for the Aeolian Quartet. As the title suggests, the work divides into eleven short sections, each of which is called an 'echo'. In spirit at least, the work reminds one of certain music of Debussy or Ravel and so could be termed 'neo-impressionistic'. At the beginning, for example, the piano has a pentatonic figure suggesting "ghostly bells". It is only the special timbre of the fifth-partial harmonics which prevents the passage from 'sounding' like a section from 'La Mer' or 'Images'. This pentatonic figure, incidentally, recurs throughout the piece until in the final 'Echo' it is used to accompany the violin, here marked 'like a prayer'.

Each player must produce various special effects during the course of the piece. We can note the abundance of piano harmonics and pizzicati, the 'wind music' of the flute and clarinet and imitations of the sounds of 'distant mandolins', 'cries of wounded birds' and 'the sighing of the wind' in the violin part.

In several of the 'Echoes' the idiomatic possibilities of the four solo instruments are exploited. Echoes 1 and 4 feature the piano, Echo 5 the flute, Echo 6 the violin, and Echo 7 clarinet.

Use is made of the piano as a resonating box so that the term 'echo" can also apply to sympathetic vibrations. This technique is most effective in Echo 4. What one can admire most about Crumb's music, perhaps, is the refinement and sensitivity. It is refreshing in an age where 'complexity' is often mistaken for 'profundity'. (J.H.)

Next Event: The Magic of Opera — March 18, 19, 20, 21, 1971; 8 p.m.